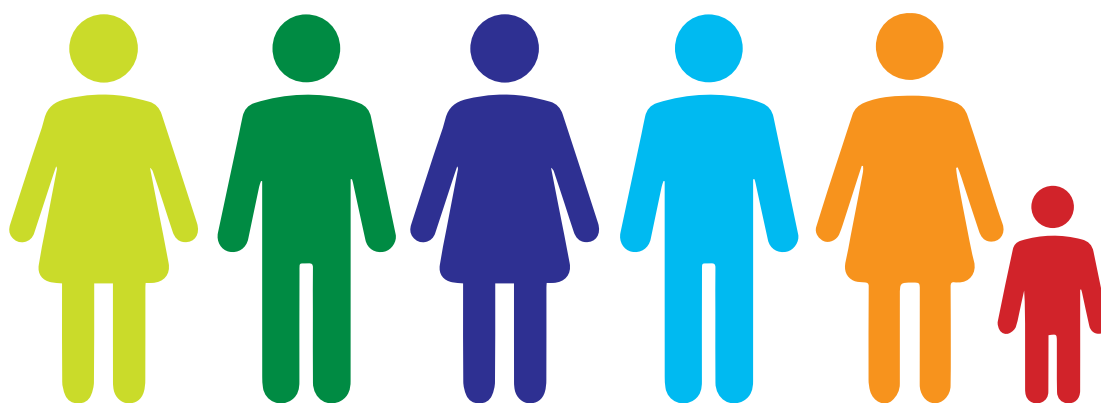


National Mental Health Commission

National Lived Experience (Peer)
Workforce Development Guidelines

Lived Experience Roles

*A practical guide to designing and
developing lived experience positions*



Australian Government

National Mental Health Commission

About this report

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Overview of this guide

This document is structured to provide a brief overview of the collective Lived Experience workforce and Lived Experience work, followed by the essentials of position descriptions that authentically represent Lived Experience practice. A detailed guide to Lived Experience roles and position description development is provided, along with examples and practical considerations from Lived Experience workers, employers, and evidence-based literature.

Designed as a companion to the *National Lived Experience (Peer) Workforce Development Guidelines* (the *National Development Guidelines*), this guide is a resource for designing clear and effective position descriptions that align with and reflect Lived Experience concepts, values and principles; and accurately reflect Lived Experience work. It clearly distinguishes the uniqueness of designated personal (consumer) and family/carer (support) Lived Experience roles and emphasises the importance of position descriptions in addressing role clarity.

It is intended this guide will support organisations to develop Lived Experience role descriptions and support Lived Experience workers to articulate and advocate for roles that are authentically informed by Lived Experience practice. It is designed both as a guide for new employers of Lived Experience workers, and as a resource for all managers, colleagues, policy developers and funders to increase understanding of Lived Experience roles.

This guide contains evidence-based information from national and international research and contributions from Lived Experience researchers, Lived Experience workers in a variety of roles, managers and Human Resource (HR) professionals. Examples of position descriptions are provided.

Lived Experience roles referred to in this document are defined as positions that are Lived Experience ‘identified’ or designated within the role title and overtly use personal or support experience of mental health challenges within their roles.

Additional information outlining the Lived Experience workforce, and comprehensive information on Lived Experience roles including a model and stages for growth of the Lived Experience workforce, are contained within the *National Development Guidelines*. This includes the essential elements of preparation, implementation, and transformation focusing on supportive workplace culture, training and development, and policies and practice.

All organisations, regardless of familiarity with Lived Experience workers and role development, are encouraged to utilise both the *National Development Guidelines* and this companion document when preparing or developing their Lived Experience workforce.

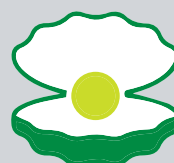
All *National Development Guidelines* documents are available for download on the Commission’s ‘Mental Health Reform’ webpage:

<https://www.mentalhealthcommission.gov.au/Mental-health-Reform>

How do I use this guide?

It is recommended to fully read this guide, regardless of the level of familiarity with the Lived Experience workforce. However, you may also at times select specific information as needed, and dip into this guide to find practical tips or examples. It is essential in implementing a Lived Experience workforce that position descriptions focus on Lived Experience values and principles, and the uniqueness of Lived Experience roles is fostered.

This guide contains quotes and tips from both Lived Experience workers, and managers with a strong track record employing Lived Experience workers. These tips are presented as:



Pearls



Pitfalls

Dedication

This guide would not have been possible without the many Lived Experience workers who generously shared their knowledge and experience to give richness and relevance to this document.



Acknowledgement and commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, perspectives and priorities

Australia's First Nations Peoples represent two distinct cultures: Aboriginal, and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. Within these broad cultural groups there is also great diversity of cultures, languages, kinship structures and ways of life.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander lived experience is complex and based within a history of colonisation, inter-generational trauma, spirituality, cultural practices and protocols. It is imperative that the opportunity for empowerment, choice and self-determined leadership comes from within communities. Lived Experience workers who are from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community align with culturally inclusive and culturally-led responses.

There is a need for service providers to have ongoing conversations with Aboriginal and Torres Strait communities to explore what Lived Experience work involves and how it might be viewed differently within communities, taking into account the need for acknowledging potential conflicts of workplace expectations versus the communities' expectations, and concepts of social and emotional wellbeing.

Without intentional and specific inclusion of appropriate and respectful responses in our pledge and commitment to closing the gap in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander social and emotional wellbeing, these *National Development Guidelines* would not reflect the significant need for inclusivity and collaboration. The leadership, cultural practices and expertise of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples across all parts of the Australian mental health and suicide prevention sector is critical to improving outcomes and building strong and powerful input to the Lived Experience workforce.

This aligns with the foundational principles of the Gayaa Dhuwi (Proud Spirit) Declaration https://natsilmh.org.au/sites/default/files/gayaa_dhuwi_declaration_A4.pdf

Lived Experience workforces

‘Lived Experience workforce’ is a collective term used to refer to both the personal (consumer) workforce and family/carer (support) workforce. In many settings and states, these are recognised as distinct workforces and in all settings the differences between the roles are acknowledged and must be upheld in position descriptions.

The Lived Experience workforces, sometimes referred to as the peer and family/carer workforces, include diverse Lived Experience roles that range from general entry-level positions to senior and leadership positions. Regardless of the role, all Lived Experience workers share a focus on relationship as instrumental to the work and have a connection to social change and the broader consumer/human rights movement.

Lived Experience discipline

Lived Experience work or practice is recognised as a unique and separate discipline that offers a valuable contribution to the mental health sector. As its own discipline, Lived Experience work has distinct values, principles, and theories that define Lived Experience work and the way it is practiced.

Lived Experience workers draw on their life-changing experiences of mental or emotional distress, service use, and recovery/healing, and their experiences, or the impact of walking beside and supporting someone through these experiences, to build relationships based on collective understanding of shared experiences, self-determination, empowerment, and hope. It is common to have experiences of distress and emotional pain, loss, stigma, discrimination, loss of rights, and navigating complex systems. Lived experience also includes experiences and an understanding of losing and regaining hope, and emancipation. People’s paths to healing, hope, and recovery are also different.

Lived Experience roles

The collective Lived Experience workforce is comprised of personal or direct Lived Experience roles which require first-hand experience of mental health challenges/diagnosis/service use and the consequent impacts, and people in designated family/carer roles who are employed to draw on their experience of having witnessed, walked beside and supported someone having those experiences. Ultimately, the roles differ in terms of who is being supported and whose perspective is primarily

being represented (either the people accessing support or their family/carers/significant others).

Development of the Lived Experience workforce within mental health services needs to be driven and led by Lived Experience workers along with support from allies. Allies are people in non-designated roles who actively and vocally advocate for Lived Experience roles. Allies are needed at all levels including colleagues, management, and funders.

The Lived Experience workforces are comprised of:

Personal or direct experience roles

(also referred to as consumer or Lived Experience roles)

These are informed by: personal experience of mental health challenges, service use, periods of healing/personal recovery

Family/carer experience roles

(also described as family, support or carer roles)

These are informed by: the experience of supporting someone through mental health challenges, service use, periods of healing/personal recovery



Development of the Lived Experience workforce within mental health services needs to be driven and led by Lived Experience workers along with support from allies. Allies are people in non-designated roles who actively and vocally advocate for Lived Experience roles. Allies are needed at all levels including colleagues, management, and funders.

Lived Experience perspective

Lived Experience work can be described as using a distinct lived experience perspective informed by a connection to the consumer movement, individual and collective experience, and Lived Experience values and principles. This perspective upholds the value and credibility of expertise gained through experience.

The lived experience perspective can be characterised as:

- Relational: the basis of the work is through relationship. Relationships are the core of connection and aim to bring greater inclusion of diverse voices in all aspects of the work.
- Political and rights-based: individual experience is connected to system change and a drive to improve services and outcomes for people who are accessing services as well as family/carers. Lived Experience roles are based in a rights and social justice framework.

“[Lived Experience work] is rights-based work, but it is more than that. It is relational and heart work. We need to stop describing peer work in relation or relative to clinical work and use our own frame of reference.”

What lived experience is required for Lived Experience roles?

What enables a person with lived experience to work in a Lived Experienced role is being willing and able to share and apply the knowledge and understanding gained within their work role. It is important to understand that the experiences, and impacts, are very personal and while ‘how much experience is enough’ is highly subjective, people with lived experience describe experiences that changed life as they knew it and took them on a different path from what they had planned. The experiences, particularly for people in personal Lived Experience roles also caused significant change to the way they viewed themselves and their place in the world.



It is not so much the particular lived experience that is important to Lived Experience roles but the expertise and valued knowledge, skills, and wisdom gained through this experience.

It is not so much the particular lived experience that is important to Lived Experience roles but the expertise and valued knowledge, skills, and wisdom gained through this experience.

As the work is informed by relationships based on connection, trust, equality, hope, and recovery it can at times be desirable to hire someone with a certain type of lived experience or background, compatible with the setting and people who will be accessing support. There are advantages for Lived Experience workers who understand what it’s like to access services in particular settings and have greater empathy for people with similar experiences. Identity and culture are also important factors that benefit from interacting with Lived Experience workers with ‘like’ experiences, identifications and cultural backgrounds.

It is important for organisations and HR professionals during the recruitment and interview process to know how to ask about lived experience and for people applying for these roles to understand what is important in talking about their experiences. It is essential that lived experience is recognised as a valued asset to the role, and to explore the expertise that person has gained through navigating their experiences.

“Workers bring a lived experience perspective to all aspects of the role. Initially peer support roles were developed as a way of assisting another with similar experiences. However, lived experience perspectives can be applied at all levels of an organisation and Lived Experience workers are valuable in a range of positions and contexts.”



To use a lived experience perspective effectively it is also vital to be reflective, develop self-awareness, strategies for self-care, and to have an appreciation of the value of your lived experience.

Specialisations

Specialisations build on the core skills of Lived Experience work and contribute particular knowledge and skill sets in relation to specific experiences, populations or settings. Specialisations recognise the relevance of identity and culture in providing support for people from diverse backgrounds and experiences. Specialisations also recognise advanced skills in areas such as research. The development of Lived Experience specialisations mirrors what has occurred in other health and community service disciplines where workers may work in generalist or specialist roles.

Specialisations also play an important role in highlighting the needs of diverse communities and experiences, and advocating for and supporting people who are marginalised through their experiences. Specialisations acknowledge intersectionality; the fact many people will have overlapping experiences, identifications, and/or backgrounds that impact on and influence their perspective and situation. Understanding the role of identity and the skills required within a certain context is significant when considering what makes someone suitable for a specialised Lived Experience role and enhances the effectiveness of specialisations.

What kind of lived experience is required for a role, depends on:

- **Identity:** To increase empathy and understanding, identity as someone with similar experiences or from a similar demographic can be important, particularly in relation to culture.
- **Context:** The lived experience needs to speak to the context/setting of the role and it may be advantageous to have experience within a similar setting such as an acute inpatient setting in order to understand the experience and how to navigate this setting.



The growth of specialisations has brought several challenges. For example, current structures within organisations and systems do not always support the employment of specialist Lived Experience workers.

The Lived Experience workforce is still developing and there is a risk in creating silos for specialist workers. An emphasis on building the perceived value of diversity and inclusion of Lived Experience roles assists in addressing this.

Lived Experience workers may specialise in a specific type of lived experience or in a specific demographic or population. Existing specialisations include those in the next table. However, specialisations are rapidly emerging and evolving and as such this is not an exhaustive list. Resources to assist with gaining a broader understanding and developing specialisations are available in [Appendix A](#).



Specialisations are important for both direct support roles and leadership roles.

Specialisations with and from the perspective of a specific type of lived experience:

- People with a history of trauma
- People with experiences of family violence
- People with experiences of perinatal mental health
- People with experiences of eating disorders
- People with experiences of suicide
- People with experiences of involuntary treatment
- People with experiences of the criminal justice system
- People with experiences of homelessness
- People with experiences of alcohol and other drug use or dependence

Specialisations with and from the perspective of a specific demographic/population:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples
- People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- People from the Deaf and hard of hearing community
- People identifying as LGBTQIA+
- Older persons
- Veterans
- Youth
- People identifying as neuro-divergent
- People with disability



The development of specialist roles must be led by Lived Experience leaders and workers with relevant experiences. The underpinning knowledge and values of the wider Lived Experience workforce and an experience of both mental health challenge/supporting someone as well as the specialist area also informs these roles.

Setting

Lived Experience workers are employed in a range of government, non-government, and private organisations. Settings include clinical inpatient settings, community health services, and community services settings outside of health.

Specialist settings

In addition to working from diverse specialist perspectives within the mental health, alcohol and other drug, and suicide prevention sectors, Lived Experience workers are increasingly employed in a range of industries and specialist settings.

Specialist settings

- General health
- Family and domestic violence services
- Gender and LGBTQIA+ services
- Disability services
- Community and arts services
- Housing and homelessness services
- Construction industries
- Veterans, emergency, and other first responder services
- Universities and other post-secondary education and training sectors

A framework for Lived Experience practice

A framework for understanding practice is provided below, including the values, principles, theories, and competencies required for Lived Experience roles. The framework of practice for Lived Experience work is characterised by values at the core of practice. Values and principles are further demonstrated in skills and competencies.

“We sell ourselves short. It is about standing in my own profession and skill base, my competency and capability, and how we convert experience to expertise. We need to be more robust in how we articulate this, and not continue to downplay expertise.”

The relationship between values, skills, and practice is represented visually by the following diagram that presents the way values underpin competencies which in turn inform and build skills and competencies, culminating in Lived Experience practice.

Lived Experience framework



Values of Lived Experience work

The values and principles of Lived Experience work are distinct, based on lived experience perspectives, encompassing human rights, transparency, equality, emancipation, and an equal power balance. Practice that matches values leads to increased job satisfaction and effectiveness. It is important Lived Experience roles incorporate competencies that align with these values and principles to support authentic practice and to reduce the chances of roles becoming 'watered down' or drawn towards more dominant ways of working.

The list of core values and principles is provided in the table below, and a more detailed description of the core values and principles of Lived Experience work is included in the *National Development Guidelines* for the development of the Lived Experience workforce.

Values

- Hope
- Equality/Equity
- Mutuality
- Empathy
- Choice
- Respect
- Authenticity
- Belonging/Inclusion
- Interdependence/interconnectedness
- Justice/Human Rights



Ensuring lived experience values and principles are reflected in Lived Experience position descriptions is important for both personal Lived Experience workers and family/carer workers to maintain role authenticity. Reflecting lived experience values and principles is also key for organisations to recognise lived experience expertise and facilitate ongoing workforce development.

“It is about values that are transferred to practice – values about another human being, belief in another human being.”

Principles

- Lived experience as expertise
- Self-determination
- Recovery-focused
- Person-directed
- Strengths-based
- Relational
- Trauma-informed
- Humanistic
- Voluntary

Theories underpinning Lived Experience practice

Theories of Lived Experience practice provide a clear understanding of what informs the work and competencies of Lived Experience practice. The approaches and theories are interconnected and complement each other.

Lived Experience workers have identified working from the following theories and approaches:

| Theory | How is it applied within Lived Experience practice? |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Personal recovery | Recovery is not defined as elimination of symptoms but as something personal; how we each find and continue to develop identity, meaning and purpose. Lived Experience work inspires self-determination and self-management and unifies support around the person and their social networks, rather than the service or illness focus. Lived Experience workers support the person to define their own understanding of recovery/healing. |
| Trauma-centred | The trauma-informed approach is centred on trust, choice, collaboration and empowerment. In other words, this approach is actively and consciously geared at not re-traumatising the person. Lived Experience work goes deeper and is often shaped by a shared understanding and empathy of the impact of trauma. Lived Experience workers focus on ‘what’s happened to a person rather than what’s wrong with a person’ and seeks to create relationships and conditions that support the person to find healing through their experiences of trauma. |
| Strengths-based | This approach focuses and seeks to build on the person’s strengths and resources that can facilitate healing and recovery. Focusing on strengths in overcoming barriers, fosters hope and empowerment, helps create new possibilities and feelings of control. |
| Social theory | Social theories focus on the wider social and structural barriers that may get in the way of personal recovery such as discrimination, racism, employment, adequate housing, social connections etc rather than seeing the problem and solutions as just involving the individual. |
| Humanistic | This approach focuses on shared humanity and role of relationship. Lived Experience work is centred on personal worth and stresses the importance of the person being a whole human being with complex experiences, feelings and circumstances. In Lived Experience work, this is evidenced by expressing empathy, respect, and advocating for empowerment and choice. |
| Holistic perspective | The holistic approach is centred around working with a person and not narrowly focusing on mental health needs. Lived Experience work considers and works with physical, emotional, social and spiritual wellbeing. This approach respects the uniqueness of the person, their culture and experience and path to healing/recovery. |

“Currently, Lived Experience Workforce is often described as non-clinical. It is described as what it is not, rather than what it is. Surely it would be preferable to describe what we are.”

Position descriptions

A well-written position description can be the first step in role clarity. Especially when creating Lived Experience positions, it is important that position descriptions are informed by lived experience values and principles. In this way, position descriptions can support the uniqueness of Lived Experience roles and provide a clear distinction from the work of non-designated roles.



Job titles and position descriptions need to be specific to personal lived experience or family/carer roles and clearly distinguish between the criteria for these roles to ensure roles are adequately tailored to the strengths and skills of these two workforces and to ensure transparency. This means avoiding position descriptions that ask for either personal/consumer or family/carer experience.

Effective position descriptions allow organisations and potential employees to clearly understand expectations of the role by explaining the essential duties, competencies, responsibilities, required qualifications, and experience related to the work.

The purpose of a position description is to:

- clarify expectations for both the employee and the organisation,
- ensure you hire the right person for the job, and
- enable the applicant to make an informed decision.



Although this guide provides tools to develop an effective position description, a co-production approach to recruitment and design of position descriptions is strongly recommended.

In the absence of senior Lived Experience roles within the organisation, external Lived Experience consultants or those in entry level Lived Experience roles within the organisation can be engaged to develop appropriate position descriptions. For a list of Lived Experience peak bodies as a starting point to assist with engaging Lived Experience consultants, please refer to [Appendix B](#).

The next part of this guide is aimed at creating effective position descriptions and is based on existing position descriptions for Lived Experience roles. The purpose is to fully understand the background and relevance of each aspect of the position description and to incorporate the lived experience perspective, theory, values, skills, and aims within the descriptions. The position descriptions are divided into roles that primarily have a focus on direct support and those that have greater emphasis on management and leadership. However, the overlap between these is acknowledged, and roles may involve a combination of direct support and management skills. Furthermore, a range of role titles currently used by organisations to describe the roles is included, as well as attention to the specialisations within Lived Experience work.

Key aspects of position descriptions

In general, position descriptions include information about the organisation, the desired employee, and the position. Position descriptions are best written in clear language and should clearly outline objectives, competencies, and duties. This adds to the clarity of the role and helps with expectation management from the employer, as well as the employee.

Position descriptions need to reflect changes over time. They should be updated as the work and duties evolve. Therefore, a position description is a living document and reflects the current requirements of the position which may vary with each position and continue to expand as the organisation grows their Lived Experience workforce.



Effective Lived Experience position descriptions specifically list what values, skills, competencies and models of practice are critical to this role, the organisation, and to Lived Experience work broadly.

A position description should articulate how the goals, objectives and values of an organisation align with and uphold the value of lived experience. By including specific lived experience workforce values and principles, the chances of hiring the right person increase and a culture that is inclusive of lived experience ways of working is promoted.



Conversely, position descriptions that are vague and generic mean that Lived Experience workers are operating in the dark, and may not be clear on what they are supposed to do. This often means they are not able to work as effectively.

Effective position descriptions

The next section describes key elements as they relate to Lived Experience roles. Creating position descriptions is a process and the description is more likely to become clear and specific by moving back and forth between the key aspects, rather than going through them step-by-step. Below we discuss the key aspects of position descriptions and then provide an illustrative example.

An effective Lived Experience position description includes:

- Position title
- Information about the organisation
- Role description/summary of the role
 - **What and Why:** key duties and purpose
 - **How:** values and Framework
 - **Field:** area(s) of specialisation
 - **When:** work schedule
- Salary
- Reporting structure and supervision
- Essential requirements (qualifications, experience)
- Core competencies (abilities, knowledge)
- Career progression
- Alignment to state/national standards and guidelines

Position titles

The titles used for Lived Experience roles are diverse and there are many different titles for similar roles. When an organisation has just begun designing Lived Experience roles, it can be difficult to find the right title for the job.

Based on different Lived Experience job titles, the list below has been developed and a detailed description of these job titles is presented in [Appendix C](#).

To find the right title, compare the tasks and descriptions in [Appendix C](#) with the position description you have created. Choose a title that accurately describes the job and suits the organisation. You can choose a generic title or incorporate the area/specialisation of the role in the title.

Common position titles include:

- Lived Experience/Peer support worker – Direct support role from the perspective of personal experience.
- Carer Lived Experience/Carer Peer support worker – Direct support role from the perspective of family/carers experience.
- Specialist Lived Experience/Peer support worker – Specialist support based on identified lived experience within a specialist setting e.g. Alcohol and other Drug (AOD), Youth, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD).
- Senior Lived Experience/Peer support worker – Supervisory, mentoring, team leader, project coordinator role.
- Lived Experience researcher/academic – Research, teaching, policy development.
- Executive Lived Experience role – Manager, Director, Board member.
- Lived Experience consultant – Advisory role, project work, policy development.
- Lived Experience advocate/representative – Direct advocacy role, public speaking, campaign development, lobby work.

Information about the organisation



Position descriptions should accurately describe the organisation, and mention not only the name of the organisation, but also the type of organisation and what it stands for. Why does this organisation exist? How does it contribute to the community or health sector? Think about its vision, aspirations, values, goals and objectives.

Example:

Our organisation is a community health service that supports people with mental health issues of all ages and needs. We believe in a world where people with mental health issues are equal citizens. Our mission is to provide services that uphold human rights and create opportunities, empowering people to live a meaningful life. People are at the centre of everything we do. We uphold a culture of honesty, approachability, and supportiveness. We are committed to building and supporting a Lived Experience workforce.

We value diversity and encourage applications from suitably qualified people identifying as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, people from CALD and LGBTIQ+ communities, people with a disability, and mature age candidates. You do not have to disclose this on your application, but it may assist us to support you through the recruitment process if you indicate how we might provide interview adjustments, an interpreter or other assistance.

It is important that the values of the organisation are clearly articulated and describe how they are all aligned with and uphold the value of Lived Experience work. After you have drafted the description of the organisation, reflect on the workplace culture that you want to foster and how this will attract and retain Lived Experience workers. Organisational culture is an important consideration for potential candidates, particularly in relation to the Lived Experience workforce.

Articulating a vision for the organisation:

Lived experience values included in the organisation's vision statement increases organisation wide commitment to the value of Lived Experience roles. Reflecting lived experience values in a position description also ensures an organisation attracts the right candidates.

Role description/summary of the role

The position description sets expectations: **what** workers are supposed to do (key duties), and **why** they are doing it (purpose), **how** they are supposed to do it and what support is provided, and **when** they are expected to do it.

What and why: key duties and purpose

Key duties refer to the tasks and responsibilities of the role. What does the role entail? What aspects fall under the responsibilities of the worker, what is expected to be accomplished, and how will it be evaluated.

These duties must align with the fundamental purpose of the Lived Experience work. The fundamental purpose of Lived Experience work has been described as:

1. Promote individual and collective strengths, capacity, and empowerment.
2. Support individual and collective advocacy.
3. Advocate for and work towards system change.

Examples of key duties:

- Form effective and empathic peer relationships by appropriately sharing personal lived experience and understanding of the impact of mental illness, service use and recovery.
- Providing peer support, practical assistance, education, information and referrals to people accessing services to support their self-led recovery journey.
- Support people that access services to develop individual recovery plans which incorporate their self-identified recovery goals, aspirations and strengths.
- Work collaboratively with other staff and service providers to improve understanding of personal recovery and build capacity to provide recovery-oriented mental health services.
- Uphold lived experience work values and principles to build relationships with people accessing services which are recovery, strength, ability and possibility focused.
- Maintain accurate and timely records of contacts and other activities and utilise Microsoft Office and other applications and software packages.
- Consistently display and promote high level commitment, integrity and diligence in all aspects of work and decision-making, apply the principles of confidentiality to ensure people accessing services and others are treated fairly and with mutual respect and understanding.

It is possible that some of these aspects are more salient in the role than others, but it is important that the duties reflect, rather than counteract, the fundamental purpose of Lived Experience work. You can use these examples for inspiration, use them directly or adapt them to fit the specific descriptions.

How: values and framework

Explaining the values and inherent framework(s) of the position ensures the role is specifically designed from a Lived Experience perspective and the authenticity of the role is protected.

Central tenants of Lived Experience work that are most often included in position descriptions are:

- Human/civil rights/social justice perspectives.
- Promoting dignity, autonomy and social inclusion.
- Not involved in coercive treatment and control.
- Overt use and value of lived experiences of adversity and recovery/healing.
- Power as equals/mutuality.
- Relationships are reciprocal.
- Use of recovery framework.

When: work schedule

What kind of position is being offered? Is it full-time, part-time or casual? Are the hours fixed or flexible? Make sure this is clear in the position description.

Example work schedules:

- Fixed term contract for 12 months on a flexible part-time basis, equivalent to 8-day fortnight.
- Casual ongoing contract, estimated up to 15 hours per week, desired availability on weekdays, with flexibility for 5 hours on weekends once per fortnight.
- Ongoing full-time or part-time (0.6 full-time equivalent [FTE]) contract, rotating fortnightly roster, including both morning and afternoon shifts, no weekend work.

Field: specialisations

In the position description, it is important to communicate in which setting the role is placed.

Refer to the section on specialisations (above), and the resources for specialisations in [Appendix A](#) for further guidance.

Salary

Salary levels help an employee decide whether a position matches their experience and qualifications. The award or enterprise agreement details must be clearly stated on the position description, including the proposed pay level and hourly rate or yearly equivalent.

Organisations can check pay levels and working conditions with more experienced organisations, Lived Experience peak bodies, unions, or Fair Work Ombudsman.

It is also recommended to detail any superannuation contributions, salary packaging and/or salary sacrifice options.

Reporting and supervision structure

The reporting and supervision structure should be described to provide a more complete description of the role. If the role is a leadership position, how many employees will be part of the supervising responsibilities? Lived Experience supervision is highly recommended for all Lived Experience roles. For applicants that have just started their Lived Experience career, it is essential that their supervisor is in a designated Lived Experience role.

Describing Lived Experience roles within the position description

This section contains examples of fundamental descriptions of Lived Experience roles as they might appear within position descriptions.

The following are examples of brief role overviews; describing the organisation and the job typically found at the beginning of the position description and can be used to inform job advertisements.

The following section describes the required or preferred experience, qualifications, and core competencies for Lived Experience workers.

Role description overview 1

Position title: *Peer Support Recovery Worker*

- **What:** Direct support and group support
Forming effective and emphatic peer relationships by appropriately sharing personal lived experience and understanding of the impact of mental illness, service use and recovery. Support people that access services to develop individual recovery plans which incorporate their self-identified recovery goals, aspirations and strengths.
- **How:** Use of human rights and recovery frameworks, no coercive treatment and control
- **When:** Fixed-term casual contract for 6 months, up to 15 hours per week
- **Salary:** This position is covered by AWARD or Enterprise agreement xxx and will be remunerated at xxx
- **Field – areas and specialisation:** None
- **Reporting and supervision structure:**
Two supervisors, line supervisor who is not in a designated Lived Experience role and practice supervisor with Lived Experience.

Role description overview 2

Position title: *Senior Lived Experience Supervisor*

- **What:** Providing supervision, mentoring, and leadership
Responsible for supervision of four peer support recovery workers. Work collaboratively with other staff and service providers to improve understanding of personal recovery and build capacity to provide recovery-oriented mental health services. Representative role at meetings. Develop and support feedback mechanisms and complaints. Support evaluation of Lived Experience programs. Take care of staff orientation and training.
- **How:** Use of human rights framework, Relationships as reciprocal
- **When:** Fixed term contract for 12 months, part-time, flexible days and hours equivalent to 8-day fortnight
- **Salary:** This position is covered by AWARD xxx and will be remunerated at xxx. A superannuation contribution of 9% is included, and salary sacrifice options can be negotiated
- **Field – areas and specialisation:** None
- **Reporting and supervision structure:** Will be supervising a team of four peer support specialists, will report to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

Experience and qualifications

For Lived Experience work, expertise gained through experience is the essential requirement and is valued equally or higher than qualifications gained through learning. Essential requirements for Lived Experience roles may also relate to the area and specialisation associated with the role. Meeting essential requirements demonstrates that the applicant possesses the required level of knowledge and ability.

Other requirements for the job include specific knowledge, qualities, and skills which can be developed through training and work experience, but also through Lived Experience and informal or volunteering roles.

Examples of required experiences and abilities:

- Lived experience of recovery from a mental illness (no requirement to disclose specific experience, unless relevant to a specialisation). Demonstrated by outlining how the experience changed the person's life, the growth and understanding gained from the experience, and how the person can use that experience to help others.
- Demonstrate experience to effectively communicate with relevant stakeholders.
- Well-developed organisational skills together with ability to manage priorities and meet deadlines and timeframes.
- Ability to work collaboratively within a team environment and contribute to the achievement of team goals and objectives.
- Ability to promote a culture of hope and optimism by sharing your lived experience of recovery to assist others within the role.
- Ability to relate, empathise with and be aware of the perspectives and diversities of others.
- Ability to establish and maintain respectful relationships while promoting an understanding of recovery-oriented practices within a multi-disciplinary team environment.
- Possess an understanding of the principles of recovery-oriented practice and peer work values.

Qualifications

There are currently no mandatory qualifications for Lived Experience workers. However, this section outlines qualifications available to Lived Experience workers, and recommended by the Lived Experience workforce.

Qualifications are generally separated into:

- Mandatory and minimum qualifications and experience.
- Highly desirable qualifications and experience.

Formal qualifications currently available include:

• Certificate IV in Peer Work

CHC43515 Certificate IV (the Cert IV) in Mental Health Peer Work is most often reported as desirable.

The Cert IV is viewed as consolidating and providing a framework for recognising and valuing existing knowledge as well as building knowledge. As a specific and nationally recognised qualification, it is seen to give Lived Experience work legitimacy.

• Intentional Peer Support (IPS)

IPS provides Lived Experience workforce with a set of principles to guide practice. IPS is values driven and gives a language to "peer work that makes sense and recognises our humanity and diversity".

• Hearing Voices

Training in hearing voices approaches gave additional skills and increases capacity to work in alternative ways that are increasingly being recognised and valued in both clinical and community.

These qualifications may be included as part of the professional development for entry-level positions or as a minimum requirement for all other Lived Experience roles. There are also other short courses or professional development courses in the Collaborative Recovery Model, Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP), Personal Medicine, Peer-led Mental Health Workshops (Peerzone), trauma-informed practice, family violence, communication skills, and cultural training that may complement the above qualifications.



Formal and Informal Networks

Although not directly theory or training related, it is strongly recognised that in order to remain sustainable, Lived Experience workers need connections and networks with other Lived Experience workers and for themselves to remain focused and connected to the wider community.

Core competencies

Core competencies are often described in terms of a minimum standard to be considered effective in a role. The core competencies for each Lived Experience role need to align with the values and principles of Lived Experience work and represent the basic requirements for the roles purpose and duties for it to be effectively carried out.

Competencies are often described as specific skill sets, or clusters of knowledge, skills, and attitudes a person needs to successfully perform key role duties. As training, mentoring, and supervision can help people develop the competencies needed to perform the work, some competencies can be considered 'preferable' rather than 'required'. However, the values of the applicant do need to align with the competencies.

Refer to the table below to work out what competencies are required for the job.

| Competencies | Description | Tasks |
|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| Ethics | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate inclusive and non-judgemental approach • Values of honesty and integrity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treating all persons equally, with dignity and respect • Does not discriminate in provision of services |
| Relational | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to engage with others • Work collaboratively • Ability to communicate effectively • Values of relationship focused work • Intentional use of lived experience | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual support • Group work • Sharing experiences • Empathic, active listening |
| Professional | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate accountability and responsibility in work practices • Engage in personal and professional development | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain records • Engage in personal and professional development • Follow policies and procedures • Self-care |
| Leadership | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and build the Lived Experience workforce • Provide supervision and professional development opportunities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representative skills • Build capacity of the Lived Experience workforce |
| Recovery | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support self-determination, self-advocacy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elicit and promote hope, strengths and recovery • Provide information, knowledge, referrals that support self-determination and recovery |
| Lived experience perspective | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a lived experience perspective • Lived experience values of human rights, social change, justice, emancipation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply a lived experience perspective to evaluation, design, training, education, representation, supervision based on lived experience values |
| System change | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate for system change • Co-production • Advocacy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support systems advocacy • Engage in co-production • Develop mechanisms for consumer participation and representation Support consumer feedback |

Career progression

To retain and develop the Lived Experience workforce, it is essential to consider opportunities for career development and progression, particularly for those recruited to entry-level positions. Including in a position description opportunity for professional development, training, formal qualification attainment, and/or mentoring and leadership opportunities can make the role more attractive to potential applicants, reduce staff turnover, and increase knowledge, skills, and experience within an organisation.

A lack of opportunities for career progression has been named as a major barrier for the Lived Experience workforce and in developing greater Lived Experience leadership roles. Consideration needs to be taken right from the outset regarding how to develop opportunities for career progression within the organisation. More experienced employers of Lived Experience workers and Lived Experience leaders within the sector can assist with structuring these pathways to ensure roles are well supported and professional development and training opportunities align with lived experience values and perspectives.

National and state guidelines

Organisational alignment to national and state Lived Experience guidelines and frameworks also helps communicate that the authenticity of the role is protected.



Organisations strongly suggest letting applicants know when they have not been selected, why they have not been selected, and to encourage them to apply for other (more relevant) positions.

Creating the position description

Lived Experience roles are diverse and creating a position description can be complicated. To aid the position description process, an example has been provided below.

Additional resources and links are provided in the *National Development Guidelines*.

Example: Position description Job Title: *Lived Experience Support Worker*

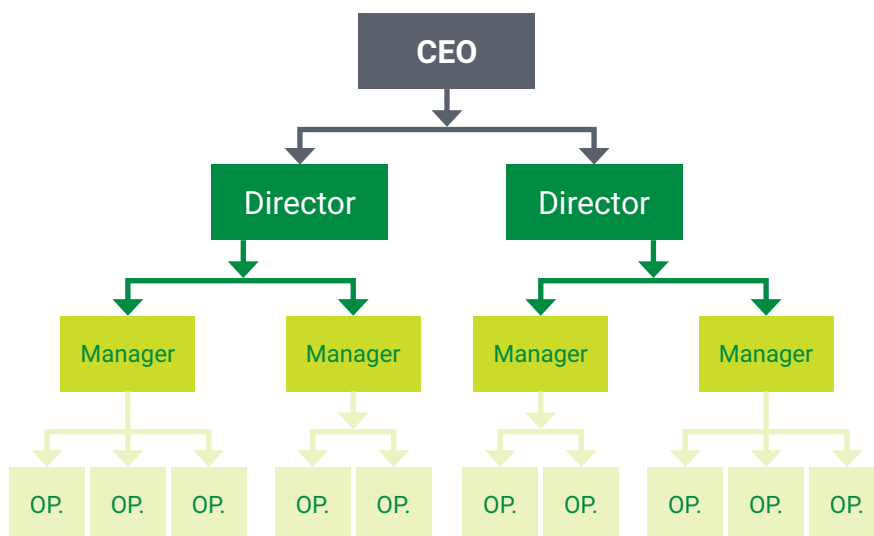
About our organisation

We (Organisation name) are a community health service that supports people with mental health issues of all ages and needs. We believe in a world where people with mental health issues are equal citizens. Our mission is to provide services that uphold human rights and create opportunities, empowering people to live a meaningful life. People are at the centre of everything we do at (Organisation name). Our culture is recognised for its honesty, approachability and supportiveness. We are committed to building a Lived Experience workforce.

Our Values: Integrity, Respect, Empowerment, Inclusion, Hope, and Trust.

Our Mission: To provide services that uphold human rights, create opportunities for people to live a meaningful life, and advocate for system change.

Organisational chart



This position will sit within the A team and reports to the A team Manager.

[Example]

Main duties/responsibilities

- Coordinate and carry out office administrative tasks including answering calls, mail, writing reports, greeting service users, and filing.
- Maintain a clean and safe workspace, and abide by workplace health and safety policies and procedures.
- Provide individual support to people accessing the service including support to identify and develop personal goals for recovery, support to identify other needs (housing, financial coaching, counselling).
- Attendance at, and participation in weekly team meetings, professional supervision, and tri-annual organisational planning meetings.
- Apply human rights and recovery frameworks in all aspect of work.
- Ensure reports, documents, and administrative tasks are accurately completed, appropriately recorded, and stored in line with organisational procedures.
- Accompany individuals to appointment (if required) in an advocacy/representative capacity.
- Actively seek and develop relationships with relevant Lived Experience networks.

**This is not an exhaustive list and will be dependent on the job analysis undertaken prior to hiring new staff.*

Qualifications and experience

Experience

- Personal or supporter (family/carer) lived experience of post-natal depression.
- Experience accessing and navigating health care services, including pre and/or post-natal services, and mental health services (psychologist, counselling, mental health service).
- At least 2 years relevant work experience involving customer service, administration, and/or group/ individual support (can be paid or voluntary work experience).

Essential qualifications

- First Aid Certificate with CPR.
- Driver's licence.

Desirable qualifications

- Certificate IV in Peer Work, or willing to obtain while working.
- An established network of peers or links with pre- and/or post-natal peer networks or support services.

Core competencies

- Intermediate Microsoft Office skills (Word, Excel, PowerPoint and Outlook).
- Ability to use, or learn to use, internal phone system.
- Ability to use, or learn to use, intranet and associated software.
- Ability to effectively communicate with diverse people and stakeholders.
- Ability to effectively organise your time, prioritise tasks, and meet deadlines.
- Understanding of Human Rights and Recovery Frameworks.
- Ability to work within a Human Rights, Recovery Framework.
- Empathy, respect, integrity and understanding of hope and power equality.
- Familiar with lived experience values and principles.
- Ability to provide an inclusive and non-judgemental service.
- Ability to use lived experience in a therapeutic and supportive way.
- Self-awareness and maturity.
- Demonstrated ability to develop respectful professional relationships with stakeholders.
- Demonstrated ability to implement self-care.

Reporting and supervision

This position reports to the A team leader during business hours, and the Shift supervisor after hours.

All employees are encouraged to participate in professional supervision. There are two options: Internal supervision or external supervision.

Internal supervision includes: [add the description]

External supervision includes: [add the description]

- The minimum requirement for professional supervision is monthly participation. Internal supervision is provided free and will be conducted by _____. External supervision will be paid for by the organisation (one session per month). If additional supervision is requested, it can be co-funded or paid for by the individual.
- Supervision is private and confidential. However, if it is identified that the person is at risk to themselves or others, the supervisor has a duty of care and may break confidentiality.

[Example]

Career progression

After the initial probationary period of 3 months, you will be able to participate in 20 hours of professional development courses. You can negotiate the courses you participate in with your supervisor. The first 10 hours will be paid for by the organisation, and the remaining 10 hours will be co-funded based on personal circumstances.

Our organisation requires all Lived Experience workers to obtain Certificate IV in Peer Work within their first year of employment. This will be paid for by the organisation. Once this qualification has been completed, you will be eligible to apply for other positions within the organisation. Career planning and progression within the organisation will be part of your annual review. You are encouraged to actively engage in this process and identify opportunities you might like to explore.

National Standards

This position aligns with the National Practice Standards for Mental Health Workforce and National Recovery Framework. Copies of these standards are available on the staff intranet or can be provided in hard copy upon request.

Other information

This section is too specific to provide an example here. It could include, but is not limited to:

- Complaint and dispute procedures.
- Disciplinary processes.
- Leave entitlements.
- Leave forms and applying for leave.
- Options for flexible work arrangements.
- Where to find organisational policies and procedure manuals.
- Fire and evacuation information (including wardens, training).
- What to do if you are injured at work.
- Fair Work information.

Appendices

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Appendix A

List of resources for specialisations

This is a list of resources and links to support the development of specialisations within the Lived Experience Workforce.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples

- *Koorified: Aboriginal communication and well-being*: <http://www.vaccho.org.au/vcwp/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/Koorified-Aboriginal-Communication-and-Well-Being.pdf>
- Comprehensive report discussing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Lived Experience workforce needs and experiences: *We are not the problem: We are part of the solution*: <https://www.blackdoginstitute.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/lived-experience-report-final-nov-2018-1.pdf?sfvrsn=2>
- *Gidgee Healing* website: <https://gidgeehealing.com/>
- A website to help find and bring together families of the Stolen Generations. *Link-up (Qld)* website: <https://www.link-upqld.org.au/>
- *NGO Aboriginal mental health lived experience workforce standards and guidelines: Self-assessment tool for organisations*: https://www.mhcsa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/LEW-Aboriginal-Guidelines_.pdf
- *Deadly thinking*: A social, emotional wellbeing and suicide prevention program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities: www.rrmh.com.au/programs/deadly-thinking
- *Deadly thinking and deadly thinking: Youth programs*: <https://www.rrmh.com.au/programs/deadly-thinking/>
- *The Glen Aboriginal Drug and Alcohol Rehabilitation Centre* website: www.theglencentre.org.au
- *The Centre for Cultural Competence Australia* website – *Consulting and cultural training*: <https://www.ccca.com.au/>
- *National Strategic Framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' Mental Health and Social and Emotional Wellbeing*: https://www.niaa.gov.au/sites/default/files/publications/mhsewb-framework_0.pdf

People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds

- *Framework for Mental Health in Multicultural Australia: Towards culturally inclusive service delivery*: <https://embracementalhealth.org.au/service-providers/framework>
- *NGO mental health lived experience workforce standards and guidelines: Self-assessment tool for organisations*: http://www.mhcsa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/LEW-MH-Guidelines_.pdf
- New service for the treatment and rehabilitation of torture and trauma survivors: *Hazara mental health consultation report*: www.nswmentalhealthcommission.com.au/report/improving-mental-health-literacy-levels-hazara-community-nsw
- *Queensland Transcultural Mental Health Centre* website: <https://metrosouth.health.qld.gov.au/qtmhc>
- *World Wellness Group: Multicultural Peer Support Workers*: <https://worldwellnessgroup.org.au/>
- *Victorian Transcultural Mental Health* website: <https://vtmh.org.au/>

People from the Deaf and hard of hearing community

- *Engaging women in trauma-informed peer support: A guidebook*: https://www.nasmhpd.org/sites/default/files/PeerEngagementGuide_Color_REVISIED_10_2012.pdf
- *Deaf Victoria* website: <https://www.deafvictoria.org.au/>
- *Being seen! Establishing deaf to deaf peer support services and training*: <https://www.nasmhpd.org/sites/default/files/BeingSeen.pdf>
- *Advancing peer support services in deaf mental health care*: <https://repository.wcsu.edu/jadara/vol50/iss1/1>
- *Deafness and Mental Health* website: <https://metrosouth.health.qld.gov.au/mental-health/services/deafness-and-mental-health>

Appendix A

List of resources for specialisations

People identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, intersex, asexual or other (LGBTQIA+)

- The national benchmark on LGBTQIA+ workplace inclusion: *Australian Workplace Equality Index* website: <http://www.pid-awei.com.au/>
- LGBTQIA+ policy guide: <https://www.theequalityproject.org.au/policy>
- *National LGBTI Health Alliance* website: <https://lgbtihealth.org.au/about/>
- *Pride inclusion programs*: <https://www.prideinclusionprograms.com.au>
- LGBTQIA+ peer support and referral service: *QLife* website: <https://qlife.org.au/>
- *Rainbow Tick standards*: <https://www.qip.com.au/standards/rainbow-tick-standards/>
- *Queerspace* website: <https://www.queerspace.org.au/>
- *Trans and gender diverse youth resources*: <https://www.theequalityproject.org.au/policy>
- *TransFolk Western Australia* website: <https://www.transfolkofwa.org/about-us/>
- Resources for the LGBTQIA+ peer workforce. *Out together toolkit and resources*: <https://www.wellways.org/out-together>

People with a history of trauma

- *Engaging women in trauma-informed peer support: A guidebook*: https://www.nasmhpd.org/sites/default/files/PeerEngagementGuide_Color_REVISED_10_2012.pdf
- Resources regarding childhood trauma. *Blue Knot Foundation: Resources*: <https://www.blueknot.org.au/Resources>
- Resources and ideas regarding mental health and recovery. *Indigo Daya blog and resources*.
- *Trauma-informed leadership for organisational change: A framework*: <http://www.mhcc.org.au/resource/trauma-informed-leadership-for-organisational-change-a-framework/>

People with an experience of family violence

- *Peer support and peer involvement*: <https://vawnet.org/sc/peer-support-and-peer-involvement>

People with experiences of perinatal mental health

- *Peach Tree Perinatal Wellness* website: <https://peachtree.org.au/>
- *Perinatal Anxiety and Depression Australia (PANDA)* website: <https://www.panda.org.au/info-support/whos-who-in-perinatal-mental-health>

People with experiences of eating disorders

- *Butterfly Foundation* website: <https://butterfly.org.au/>
- *National Eating Disorders Collaboration (NEDC) Peer Work Guide*: <https://www.nedc.com.au/professional-development/peer-work/>

People with experiences of suicide

- *PAUSE (Peer, Acceptance, Support, Understanding, and Empathy)* website: <https://www.brookred.org.au/distress-support>
- *Male peer support training*: <https://malesuicidepreventionaustralia.com.au/male-peer-support-training/>
- *People with lived experience of suicide*: <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/mentalhealth/Pages/services-towards-zero-suicides-lived-experience-of-suicide.aspx>
- *Suicide prevention peer workforce development*: <https://rosesintheocean.com.au/le-peer-workforce/>
- *"All I need is someone to talk to". Evaluating discharged suicide peer support*: <https://www.transfolkofwa.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Evaluating-DISCHARGED-Suicide-Peer-Support.pdf>

People with experiences of involuntary treatment

- *The Lived Experience Workforce in South Australian public mental health services*: <https://www.mhcsa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/The-Lived-Experience-Workforce-in-SA-Public-Mental-Health-Services.pdf>
- *Alternative to coercion in mental health settings: A literature review*: https://socialequity.unimelb.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0012/2898525/Alternatives-to-Coercion-Literature-Review-Melbourne-Social-Equity-Institute.pdf
- *Experiences of peers working on acute inpatient psychiatric units*: <https://psycnet.apa.org/record/2016-49035-001>
- *Seclusion report: How safe is my hospital?* <https://www.vmiac.org.au/category/restrictive-practices/>

Appendix A

List of resources for specialisations

People with experiences of the criminal justice system

- *Nebraska peers working with police in innovative program to avert crises:* <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1002/mhw.31479?af=R>
- *Peer support within criminal justice settings: The role of forensic peer specialists:* <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/599ee1094c0dbff62a07fc13/t/59af1347d8e3974ceaa105ce/1376071906957/ForensicPeerGAINSCenter+1.pdf>
- An article examining consumer participation at the Victorian Institute of Forensic Mental Health. *Lighting the match: Consumer participation at Forensicare:* <https://cmha.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/2011NewparadigmAutumn.pdf>
- *Mental health peer navigators: Working with criminal justice-involved populations:* https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/0032885517704001?casa_token=s19KsWhpcRYAAAAA%3AWqke_kAppM3HjMsGbMqgvJxn3FtFO8xEHEVjLZvoXYGphBf9F_GlUn8bEBZgKleTS5X_JwGo4NbPeQ
- *The value of lived experience with the criminal justice system: A qualitative study of peer re-entry specialists:* <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/30773078/>
- *Peer support and re-entry: Criminal justice series webinar 2:* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9aCBKPCjdBY>
- *Finding hope in a hopeless place: Battling mental health in prison:* <https://www.forensicare.vic.gov.au/finding-hope-in-a-hopeless-place-battling-mental-health-in-prison/>

People hearing voices

- *Hearing Voices Network website:* <http://www.hearing-voices.org/>
- *How do hearing voices peer-support groups work? A three-phase model of transformation:* <https://www.mentalhealthexcellence.org/how-do-hearing-voices-peer-support-groups-work-a-three-phase-model-of-transformation/>
- *Integrating peer work with a specific therapeutic target: Experiences from the voice exchange program:* https://www.researchgate.net/publication/265216286_Integrating_peer_work_with_a_specific_therapeutic_target_Experiences_from_the_Voice_Exchange_program
- *Voices Victoria website:* https://www.unitingprahran.org.au/ourservices/voices-vic/#page_1

People with experiences of homelessness

- *Experts by experience: Peer support and its use with the homeless:* <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/28176210/>
- *Homeless health peer advocacy:* <https://groundswell.org.uk/what-we-do/healthandhomelessness/homeless-health-peer-advocacy/>
- *How does peer support work in the context of homelessness?* <https://www.homelesshub.ca/blog/how-does-peer-support-work-context-homelessness>

People who have experiences of alcohol and other drug use or dependence

- *Lived experience in new models of care for substance use disorder: A systematic review of peer recovery support services and recovery coaching:* <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.01052/full>
 - *Queensland Injectors Health Network (QuIHN) webpage:* www.quihn.org
 - *Self Help Addiction Resource Centre: Peer projects:* www.sharc.org.au/peer-support
 - *Benefits of peer support groups in the treatment of addiction:* <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5047716/>
 - *The peer workforce report. Mental health and alcohol and other drug services:* <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5cbec5be7a1fbd1c3c41ca41/t/5ce271c82cb6cf0001531544/1558344146347/The-Peer-Workforce-Report-2018.pdf>
- ### People identifying as neuro-divergent
- *Literature review: Best practice in peer support:* <https://www.amaze.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Final-Amaze-peer-support-literature-review-April-2018.pdf>
 - *New program in Brisbane for young adults with ASD:* <https://www.autismawareness.com.au/news-events/aupdate/q-autism-awareness-chill/>
 - *Knowing what to do: Exploring meanings of development and peer support aimed at people with autism:* <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13603116.2018.1427807>

People with disability

- *Disability Inclusive language:* <https://www.and.org.au/pages/inclusive-language.html>
- *Team up: Peers creating change:* <https://cid.org.au/team-up/>
- *Leading diversity in the workplace:* <https://www.dca.org.au/>
- *Peer Connect website:* <https://www.peerconnect.org.au/>
- *The benefits of peer support:* <https://vimeo.com/175482986> [film].
- *"You hear voices too?": A hearing voices group for people with learning disabilities in a community mental health setting:* <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/bld.12255>

Appendix A

List of resources for specialisations

Older persons

- *The unique contribution of older people with a lived experience of mental illness to the peer workforce: Observations from older peer workers:* https://www.researchgate.net/publication/324850952_The_unique_contribution_of_older_people_with_a_lived_experience_of_mental_illness_to_the_peer_workforce_observations_from_older_peer_workers
- *The development and implementation of a peer support model for a specialist mental health service for older people: Lessons learned:* <https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/MHRJ-09-2017-0043/full/html>
- *Older persons peer worker project:* <http://pgna.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Older-Persons-Peer-Worker-Project-Raichel-Green.pdf>
- *Mental health services and programs for older people:* <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/mentalhealth/services/pages/programs-older-people.aspx>
- *Showcasing: The older persons peer support program:* <https://www.nswmentalhealthcommission.com.au/content/older-persons-peer-support-program>
- *The CHOICE pilot project: Challenges of implementing a combined peer work and shared decision-making programme in an early intervention service:* <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/29230972/>
- *The experiences of youth mental health peer workers over time: A qualitative study with longitudinal analysis:* <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/31970578>
- *ReachOut Australia, Online Youth Peer Support Communities webpage:* <https://au.reachout.com/> and <https://forums.au.reachout.com/>
- *Headspace Community Chat Spaces webpage:* <https://headspace.org.au/eheadspace/spaces/community/380825/>

Veterans and serving members of the Defence Forces

- *Open Arms – veterans and families counselling: Community and peer program:* <https://www.openarms.gov.au/get-support/community-and-peer-program>
- *Men's health peer education program:* <https://www.dva.gov.au/health-and-treatment/work-and-social-life-programs/mens-health-education-and-support/mens-health>
- *Veteran peer to peer support pilot program:* <http://www.defencecare.org.au/docs/Peer%20to%20Peer%20Support%20Program.pdf>
- *Veteran peer support: What are the mechanisms?* <https://psycnet.apa.org/record/2017-25257-030>

Young people

- *Youth mental health resources and support. Batyr webpage:* <https://www.batyr.com.au/>
- *Youth peer support in a mental health context: Evidence in-sight:* <https://iknow-oce.esolutionsgroup.ca/api/ServiceItem/GetDocument?clientId=A1B5AA8F-88A1-4688-83F8-FF0A5B083EF3&documentId=941ad4d1-27db-4b67-b79b-d2f5c1b0a57a>
- *Information about Peer Support workers and how to access them for young people. The peer support team:* <https://oyh.org.au/client-hub/peer-support-team>
- *Youth peer work toolkit:* <https://www.orygen.org.au/About/Youth-Engagement/Resources/youth-peer-work-toolkit.aspx>

Online peer support

- *ReachOut Australia, Online Youth Peer Support Community website:* <https://au.reachout.com/> and https://forums.au.reachout.com
- *ReachOut Australia, Parents Online Peer Support Community website:* <https://forums.parents.au.reachout.com/>
- *Beyondblue Online Peer Support Community website:* <https://www.beyondblue.org.au/get-support/online-forums>
- *SANE Australia Online Peer Support Community website:* <https://www.sane.org/forums>
- *A virtual peer support service which can connect you to a peer worker via video chat or a phone call. efriend:* <https://efriend.org.au/>
- *eheadspace. Community Chat Spaces website:* <https://headspace.org.au/eheadspace/spaces/community/380825/>
- *Carers Gateway Online community website:* <https://forum.carergateway.gov.au/s/>

People in rural, regional and remote areas

- *Peer support for people with chronic conditions in rural areas. A scoping review:* www.rrh.org.au/journal/article/3601
- *Respectfully engaging with rural communities:* https://www.crrmh.com.au/content/uploads/Document_Respectfully-engaging-with-rural-communities_2019.pdf
- *Rural and Regional Community Wellbeing Collaboratives:* <https://www.crrmh.com.au/programs-and-projects/community-wellbeing-collaboratives/>

Appendix B

Peak bodies

The below lists the peak agencies and networks for people with Lived Experience (consumers or carers or both) and Lived Experience workforce peaks.

| Peak agency | Jurisdiction | Consumer/family/carers workforce |
|---|--------------|---|
| ACT Mental Health Consumer Network | ACT | Consumer Peak |
| Being | NSW | Consumer Peak |
| CLEW (Carer Lived Experience Workforce) | VIC | Carer Network |
| CoMHWA | WA | Consumer Peak |
| Flourish | TAS | Consumer Peak |
| LELAN | SA | Consumer Peak |
| Lived Experience Australia <i>formerly the Private Mental Health Consumer Carer Network (Australia) Limited</i> | National | Consumer/Carer Peak for people accessing private mental health services |
| Mental Health Carers Australia | National | Carer Peak |
| Mental Health Carers NSW | NSW | Carer Peak |
| Mental Health Family and Friends Tasmania <i>Formerly Mental Health Carers Tasmania</i> | TAS | Carer Peak |
| National Mental Health Consumer and Carer Forum | National | Consumer/Carer Peak |
| NSW Consumer Peer Workers' Committee | NSW | Lived Experience Public Mental Health Workforce Peak |
| PHN MHLEEN | National | Lived Experience Network |
| QLEWN | QLD | Lived Experience Workforce Peak |
| TANDEM | VIC | Carer Peak |
| TEMHCO (Top End Mental Health Consumer Organisation) | NT | Consumer Peak |
| VMIAC | VIC | Consumer Peak |
| WA Peer Supporters Network | WA | Consumer/Carer Peak |

Appendix C

List of common Lived Experience position titles and tasks

The below lists the peak agencies and networks for people with Lived Experience (consumers or carers or both) and Lived Experience workforce peaks.

| Common title | Alternate title | Description | Tasks |
|--|--|--|--|
| Lived Experience/ Peer Support Worker | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peer Support Recovery Worker Mental Health Peer Worker Consumer Peer Support Worker Consumer Peer Worker Peer Community Support Worker Community and Peer Advisor Carer Peer Support Worker Family Peer Support Worker Family Peer Worker Carer Peer Worker Recovery worker Recovery Assistant Peer Mentor/Recovery Mentor Wellbeing Coach Lived Expertise Coach Lived Expertise Worker Lived Expertise Connection and Resource Worker Lived Expertise Group Facilitator Lived Experience Worker | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Direct support with individuals and groups (personal lived experience and family/carer roles) Role model/mentor Expertise through experience | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community engagement/linking/networking Provide information regarding support options and resources Support with daily living/ everyday experiences Navigating community services Promoting engagement Supporting skills in self-management Attend multi-disciplinary meetings Ensure human rights are upheld Relational support Planning and goal setting Mediating role with other professionals Attending clinical and tribunal meetings with people accessing services Navigating the mental health system Support, education and information for families Quality and improvement of services Assisting to organise community events |

Appendix C

List of common Lived Experience position titles and tasks

| Common title | Alternate title | Description | Tasks |
|--|--|--|---|
| Specialist Lived Experience/ Peer Support Roles | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth Peer Support Worker, AOD Peer Support Worker, Peer artist, CALD Peer worker, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander support worker | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specialist support based on experience or identity as belonging to a cultural or other demographic group | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide culturally specific training Support Social and Emotional Wellbeing |
| Senior Lived Experience/ Peer Worker | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Senior Peer worker, Peer Support Lived Experience Coordinator/advisor Mental Health Consumer Consultant Lived Experience Consultant Consumer Carer Consultant Family/Carer Consultant Carer Representative Team Leader Project Officer Consumer and Carer Participation/engagement Coordinator Peer Support Supervisors/ Coordinators Consumer Services Coordinator/Carer Services Coordinator/ Lived Experience Practice Specialist | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides supervision, mentoring, and leadership | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides a perspective to the team from someone that has personally accessed services Representative role at meetings Supervision Develop and support feedback mechanisms and complaints Attend external meetings like state-wide and DHHS meetings etc Minimal direct client work Support evaluation of Lived Experience programs Staff orientation and training Developing resources Provide a carer perspective Support evaluation of carer and family programs Developing policy and procedures Provide input into clinical governance meetings |

Appendix C

List of common Lived Experience position titles and tasks

| Common title | Alternate title | Description | Tasks |
|--|---|---|---|
| Executive Leadership Lived Experience Roles | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lived Experience Manager Director Project Manager Project Office | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting workforce Workforce management Supervision | |
| Lived Experience Consultant | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lived Experience Advisor | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop model of support Lived experience perspective Work with people that access services, and families | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program coordination Strategic level input and planning Input into policy Lived Experience perspective Designing and developing training Chair meetings Support development of Lived Experience workforce |
| Representative/ Advocacy Roles | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consumer Advocate Consumer Advisor Lived Experience Advisor Consumer and Carer Evaluator and Auditor | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocacy and representing the perspective of lived experience within meetings or different settings | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public speaking, addressing discrimination and stigma |

